Overhauling of Indian Meteorological Department

411. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to an article authorized by Chairman "Inter-governmental Panel on Climate change" wherein he has pleaded for an overhaul of the Indian Meteorological Department in the wake of Tsunami disaster; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) India Meteorological Department requires an overhaul in terms of personnel and upgradation of equipment, both prior to and after Tsunami. The Ministry of Science & Technology is thinking of various possibilities. As regards upgradation Ministry has already taken steps in that direction. Once details are finalized appropriate steps will be taken.

Advanced technology for forecasting Tsunami

412. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of OCEAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details with regards to utilization of advanced technology and Software, for correctly forecasting the Tsunami disasters, much in advance to save the affected places from disaster;

(b) the present status of action taken so far, in expediting the utilization of latest technology for forecasting Tsunami disasters; and

(c) the details of budget released, purpose-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) There are likely locales in the Indian Ocean where undersea earthquakes of magnitudes capable of generating Tsunamis can occur. A network of sensors covering these areas is proposed to be put in place at ocean bottom for monitoring the propogation of Tsunami waves in these areas and sending real-time signals to a centralized node. Advanced state of the art technology is proposed to

be utilized for assessing the earthquakes, propogation of waves and generating a Tsunami/storm Surge advisory.

(b) A proposal is being finalized for establishment of a warning system. The system comprises of the following components:

* Strengthening of the existing seismological network to identify in near real time occurrence of Tsunamigenic earthquake.
* Installation of Tsunami warning sensors close to the ocean bottom at appropriate underwater earthquake-prone locales in the Indian Ocean, with real time connectivity.
* Tide gauge and data bouys networking.
* Modelling of the inundation scenarios for the entire coast.
* The establishment of a center for collection of the information, analysis and generating Tsunami and storm surge advisories.

(c) No budget has so far been released.

Sriranga patna-Bidar Highway

413. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the project undertaken for upgradation from State Highways to National Highways;

(b) the period earmarked to complete Sriranga patna-Bidar Highway in Karnataka; and

(c) the estimated cost of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) In February, 2004 the Ministry has declared 7457 kms of State Roads as National Highways. It is premature to indicate any time-frame for further declaration of National Highway.

(c) This Ministry is primarily responsible for development and maintenance of only National Highways. The Sriranga patna-Bidar Highway is a State road and as such no period for completion and estimated cost for the project can be fixed by this Ministry.